

Remarks

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Substance of Interview

Applicants' attorney confirms the telephone discussion with the Examiner on February 15, 2008, concerning the statement at about the middle of page 7 of the Office Action. The Examiner indicated that the rejections set forth in the Office Action are the "best" rejections; and that the first full paragraph on page 7 of the Office Action represents an invitation for Applicants to consider the EP 0 503 856 reference (erroneously cited by the Examiner as EP 0 503 586) and the GB 2 338 240 reference. These references will be discussed below.

Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2, as a result of which claim 2 has been cancelled. In addition, Ar⁴ in amended claim 1 is limited to only the second divalent group under the definition for Ar⁴ in claim 2.

Claim 3, along with claims 5-8 and 10-12, have been amended to overcome the claim objections at the top of page 2 of the Office Action, as a result of which these objections have been rendered moot.

Claim 4 has also been amended to incorporate limitations along the lines of amended claim 1. New formulae have been inserted in place of formulae (3), (4) and (5) in claim 4. These new formulae are condensed versions of formulae (3), (4) and (5) taking into consideration the limited definitions for the variables in these formulae.

Rejections

The patentability of the presently claimed invention, after entry of the foregoing amendments, over the disclosures of the references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims, will be apparent upon consideration of the following remarks.

Thus, the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Mormann et al. (US '727) is respectfully traversed.

As noted by the Examiner, this reference discloses the compound of formula (I) reproduced on page 2 of the Office Action. This reference compound has a phenylene ring within the brackets, which corresponds to one of the original Ar⁴ divalent groups in claim 2. But amended claim 1 no longer includes this divalent group, since amended claim 1 defines Ar⁴ as a 1-cyclohexen-1,4-diyl group. These compounds of amended claim 1 are clearly distinguished from the compounds of the Mormann et al. reference.

The dependent claims subject to this rejection are patentable over Mormann et al. for the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable over this reference.

The rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mormann et al. is respectfully traversed.

The comments set forth above concerning this reference are equally applicable to the present rejection. Since the reference does not disclose, or suggest, the epoxy compounds produced in accordance with claim 4, the reference does not disclose or suggest a method for producing these compounds.

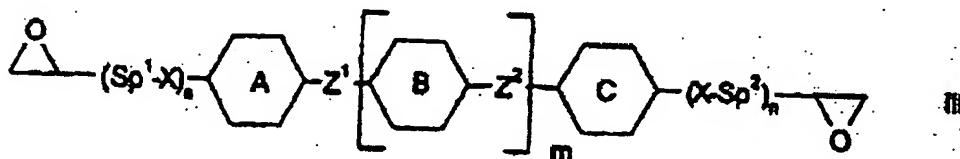
The rejection of claims 6 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mormann et al. in view of Schoenfeld et al. (US '379), as well as the rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mormann et al. in view of McCormack et al. (US '555) and the rejection of claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mormann et al. in view of Schoenfeld et al. and McCormack et al., are all respectfully traversed.

All of these rejected claims are indirectly dependent on claim 1, which is patentable over the Mormann et al. reference for the reasons set forth above. The subject matter of these dependent claims is considered to be patentable over the combined references applied by the Examiner for the same reasons. That is, even if the references were combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the result of such combination would still not suggest the claimed subject matter.

Additional Prior Art Made of Record

Referring to the first full paragraph on page 7 of the Office Action, although epoxy compounds are exemplified at page 6, lines 32-39 of the EP '856 reference, these compounds fail to anticipate or suggest the compounds of amended claim 1 set forth above.

The disclosure on page 6 of the GB '240 reference includes the compounds of formula (III):



and specific examples of tricyclic mesogenic groups are disclosed at page 8, lines 15-28 of this reference. Applicants take the position that the genus of formula III of the reference is so broad that it fails to constitute a teaching or suggestion of the epoxy compounds of the presently claimed invention. Applicants further point out that there is no specific disclosure of any epoxy compound of the present invention within the reference. Furthermore, as shown in Examples 5 and 7 of the present specification, the cured product obtained by curing the epoxy compound of the present invention exhibits liquid crystallinity and high thermal conductivity, which is completely unexpected based on the reference disclosure.

Conclusion

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that each of the grounds of objection and rejection set forth by the Examiner has been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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